

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in light of the present Amendment and the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-11 were pending. Claim 2 has been cancelled by this amendment, Claims 1, 3 and 4 have been modified by this amendment, and Claims 12-16 have been added by this amendment. No new matter has been added.

In the office action, claims 1 and 3 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Japanese Patent No. 2000-105014; claim 2 was rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Japanese Patent No. 2000-105014 in view of Ehrlich; claims 4-9 were not rejected, but were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim.

Applicants thank the examiner for the indication of allowable subject matter.

Originally presented dependent Claim 4 has been rewritten in independent form (1) containing all of the limitations of the base claims, but (2) broken down into paragraphs and sub-paragraphs to accommodate the merger of Claims 1, 2, and 4. In addition, originally presented dependent Claim 3 has been amended to depend from newly independent Claim 4 and to eliminate recitations found in that claim--i.e., to eliminate duplications which would have existed if the dependency of Claim 3 had simply been changed from Claim 1 to Claim 4.

In addition, Applicants have amended Independent Claim 1 and presented new Independent Claim 12 and new Claims 13-16 depending directly or indirectly from new Independent Claim 12.

Independent Claim 1 was rejected as being anticipated by JP-A.2000-105012 (hereinafter referred to "publication '014"). That publication was cited in the background section of this application. As described therein, the air conditioner disclosed in publication '014 cannot perform humidity control other than by a temperature control. Specifically, as shown in Fig. 1 of publication '014, each of the plurality of indoor units B, C, and D includes

only one heat exchanger 5. In contrast, Amended Independent Claim 1 and newly presented Independent Claim 12 recite an indoor unit including a plurality of heat exchangers.

Each indoor unit of the air conditioner shown in publication '014 has only one heat exchanger, which means that the indoor unit can perform only a heating or a cooling operation, not both. In contrast, Amended Independent Claim 1 and newly presented Independent Claim 12 recite one indoor unit in which one heat exchanger performs a heating operation and another heat exchanger performs a cooling operation. This allows the air conditioning apparatus to perform humidity control independently of the temperature control.

In addition, Amended Independent Claim 1 and newly presented Independent Claim 12 recite a plurality of indoor units each of which includes a plurality of heat exchangers. Therefore, the air conditioning apparatus can perform humidity control for each indoor unit individually.

In view of the foregoing an early and favorable action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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